

Cohasset Mariner

The Mariner (and supplements) is a paid circulation newspaper published every Thursday at 541 Plain St., Marshfield, Mass. 02050 for and about the residents of Cohasset. Telephone 383-6321 or 837-3500. Mailing address: Box 71, Cohasset, Mass. 02025. Second class postage paid at Marshfield, Mass. 02050.

Publishers: David S. Cutler & Michael H. Stearns

General Manager: Michael Stearns

Managing Editor

Advertising Manager

Make-up Editor

Editor: David Cutler

Bucky Yardume

Jo-anne Morris

Margaret Smoragiewicz

Editorial Staff: Judith Epstein, Nancy Burns, Nina Belsan, Joan Pinkham, Lois Martin, Joanne Young Nawn and David Bond. Photographers: Lindy Blaisdell and Gregory Derr. Advertising Staff: Trisha Massa, Anne Finn and Susan Reed, sales representatives: Kathleen Kuss and Elizabeth McIntosh, design. Editorial Assistants: Katherine Piel, Elaine Nobles, Mary O'Brien, Dianne Crawford, Lois Hall, Luella Harlos and Diana Gregory.

As the Mariner goes to press Tuesday night, all news and advertising copy must be received by Monday at 5 p.m. Classified advertising must be received by Monday at noon. Readers are invited to submit personal items, accounts of social functions, meetings, weddings and engagements. Photographs (black and white glossy) are also welcome.

Subscription rates: in-town \$8 for one year and \$14 for two years; out-of-town \$10 for one year and \$7 for nine months.

Postmaster: Send Form 3579 to Box 682, Marshfield, Mass. 02050

Editorial

See How They Run

The Cohasset town elections lack drama. With less than three weeks to go before voters decide who to put at the helm, the campaign has proved about as interesting as a TV test pattern.

The lack of fervor to date is disappointing. With crowded races for the School Committee and the Board of Selectmen, the two most important elected bodies in town, one might presume that enthusiasm would rule. So far it hasn't.

All that could change quickly if the candidates take steps to publicly articulate their positions. We would like to know, for example, how the candidates for Selectman feel about removing police from Civil Service. What is their position on hiring an executive secretary or a town administrator? What would they do about Cohasset's paucity of cemetery space? With five candidates running for one seat, there have to be different answers, and the voters ought to know what they are.

The present School Committee is a relatively conservative body, determined to keep a tight rein on spending. How do the candidates stand on the money issue. What are their philosophies on education? We think the voters ought to know and the more they know the better.

Cohasset elections can stir the political pot and continue to remain fittingly appropriate for a small town. Bumper stickers and political placards are unnecessary. Public statements aimed at the issues are important if the decision-making process is to be an intelligent one.

School Budget

(continued from page 1)

compute in the elementary grades, Maloney explained, when children don't have all the elective and sequential courses of a high school student. However, he added, the projected figures for enrollment have already been overestimated.

The Joseph Osgood School, which shows a reduction of \$34,453 in its budget, will also be shy two non-teaching activity aides. This year's three kindergarten classes are staffed with two teachers and first-grade classes are staffed with four teachers, with class size eventually moving, Maloney said, to a ratio of 20 students to 1 teacher.

Currently Kindergarten class size is under 25 children and next year's is expected to be about 23; first grade classes this year are slightly higher than 20 and next year's class is projected for an even 20, if the same number of teachers are retained.

These grades gave rise to the most discussion at the

hearing as parents voiced concern that a reduction to three first grade teachers in response to low enrollment figures, could seriously affect their children. One mother noted that the kindergarten and first grade classes she has observed are very confusing and that the teacher can't pay adequate attention to all the children.

Maloney said that he agreed with the parent and with the educators who recommend small classes in the first two years of school. He said he was bound by statute, however, to notify untenured teachers by April 15 that they will not be re-employed for the following school year, and that as of the moment it looked as though either three or four first grade teachers may be employed.

This notification procedure has been necessary in the Cohasset school system since last year, so as not to hire staff without first determining the staffing needs of a class, Maloney said.

Spring Has Sprung!



TM Warrant Review

Town Meeting-goers will address 78 articles beginning April 7 at the high school gymnasium. The Mariner has been and concludes here a preview of those articles that are controversial.

Article 44 should create a stir in requesting the town to empower Selectmen to petition the General Court to exempt future members of the Police Department from Civil Service regulations.

Selectmen approve of the article and have voiced their opinion Civil Service is too unwieldy a process to work through, especially when awaiting eligibility lists and appointments for available position. Selectmen feel Civil Service tests have been outmoded and that their board can determine qualified testing systems.

Police, however, generally view Civil Service as an important and viable recourse, in the event the town takes action against an officer and to examine the circumstances under Civil Service law — the last word in the dismissal of a police officer.

The next 27 articles deal with proposed zoning by-law changes. Most amend use

and area regulations in various sections within the zoning by-laws, particularly wetlands and business districts.

Article 71, submitted by the Planning Board, will probably receive the most attention. The proposal requests a change in required area of a Highway District business lot from 10,000 square feet to 40,000 feet. An increase in frontage from 50 to 200 feet is also included as well as many other increases in area requirements.

Merchants already established on Rte. 3A are outraged at this article which would force their land and property to become non-conforming and they claim less valuable. They have their opponents, however, who feel 10,000 square feet for a business lot is too small, and that it would encourage the development of many small businesses along 3A which is already too congested and riddled with curb cuts.

Article 64 again cited dramatic changes for the area of a business lot in the Downtown District which would increase area from 0 to 5,000 square feet and frontage from 20 to 50 feet, width from 20 to 50 feet,

with the rest of the current requirements remaining the same.

The Planning Board has been trying for some time now to have the town topographically mapped properly with aerial photography. These maps would show land contours, streets, property lines, drainage patterns, flood plain and watershed protection areas and physical structures.

A similar article asking for \$50,000 was voted down last year, and the prognosis for this year's consideration of the article remains clear because of the price tag of \$63,000. Last week's hearing disclosed that the lowered price for the maps, which initially was set at \$103,000, would exclude an assessor's map but would allow for the topographical base maps.

Article 75 requests that the town appropriate \$7,200 to train six firefighters as Emergency Medical Technicians. EMT's have helped considerably in aiding residents safely to hospitals and saving lives of those who may otherwise have been victims of choking or heart attacks.

Article 44 Has Police Uptight

To the Editor:

The members of the Cohasset Police Association are concerned about an article filed in the warrant in the annual town meeting in the Town of Cohasset. The specific article involved is Article 44 and proposes to remove the Cohasset Police Department from Civil Service. It is our understanding that this article has been sponsored and is being supported by the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Cohasset.

Our difficulty is that there is little or no information being made available by the Board of Selectmen as to the meaning and intent of the article and the manner in which they propose it to be carried out.

At no time have the Board of Selectmen indicated to the townspeople what they would suggest as an alternative if Civil Service was removed from the Police Department. It is our understanding that both the Advisory Committee in the Town of Cohasset and the Government Structure Committee in the town, both of whom would be intimately involved in this type of article and in the administration of the Police Department, have been denied any information

Letters

with respect to it. In the present era of open government, we decry any "secret plan" from the Board of Selectmen and feel they have an obligation to the electorate to explain their alternative administration of the Police Department if it were to be removed from Civil Service.

Notwithstanding the lack of information, there are certain obvious defects which we feel should be called to your attention and the attention of the citizens and taxpayers in the Town of Cohasset.

First, the present manner by which police officers are selected for appointment to the department and thereafter for promotion, is funded entirely by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts through the Civil Service Commission and the personnel administrator's office. They have been performing this process for the greatest percentage of the cities and towns in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for many years and have accumulated expertise and

ability in this area which could not be hoped to be assimilated in the Town of Cohasset overnight. The potential costs of administration therefore could be astronomical.

The quality of police service in the Town of Cohasset at the present time, in our opinion, is of the highest order. We feel that if appointments to the Police Department and promotion in the Police Department were left to political patronage, then the lives and safety of the public of the Town of Cohasset clearly would not be enhanced.

The issues involved here far surpass the basic question of job security. In fact, a combination of collective bargaining and the Civil Service statute provide that type of job security in the alternative for each member of the department. Our concern is rather a maintenance of the fifty one years of successful Civil Service administration of our Police Department as against a proposal that has no apparent alternative plan, nor realistic expression of administration.

Brian W. Noonan, President
Cohasset Police Relief
Association, Inc.